
THE
POETS Address
TO
K I N G
JAMES II.
Surnamed the Just

— *Illius aram*
Sepe tener nostris ab ovilibus imbuet agnus. Virg.

POETS in *Vice* challenge an equal share,
With those they from the Stage so pertly jeer ;
They'll *Whore, Drink, Lie, Quarrel* perhaps & *Swear* :
Sad truths we own, unhappy Men, who must,
If to our Laws and *Calling* we'd be just ;
Like the bold Man, who went himself and saw
A Battle's bloody Scene, to learn to draw :

A

For

For nothing takes, as Canting *Tubsters* Teach,
 More than when Men their own Experience Preach.
 Wou'd *POETS* Edifie by what they Write;
 They must Intrigue by Day, and Drink by Night,
 Wou'd they strike home, and have their Satyr bite.
 Yet in this Roll of *pure convenient* Crimes,
 Which learn us how with Art to lash the Times.
 (Record the Fact to our Immortal Fame;)
Rebellion ne'er did stain the *Muses* Name:
Character-Settle, if you please to bate,
 Who, *Judas*-like, Repented when too late.
Beaumont and Fletcher (that exalted pair)
 Once with their Muse went down to take the Air;
 Beneath a Hedge, close by the Road, they lay,
 Moulding the Figure of an unborn Play.
 At winding up of the well-labour'd Scene,
 It was Resolv'd, the King must die; but then,
 About the *How*, and *Where*, Debates arose:
 One was for Stabbing, t'other Poison chose.
 A Country Fellow over-hearing this
 (As every Subject bound in duty is)
 Had 'em secur'd, and up to Town he Spurr'd,
 and swore the same before the Council-Board.
Daggers and Poison, Plots against the King,
 O're all the Kingdom, Towns, and Court does ring.
 Well up the bold Intriguers both are brought;
 Bold, ~~they are~~ *guilty* ne'er in Dream or Thought?
 Our Country *Wagg*, from Arguments of Sense, ~~and~~ *will*
 His dreadful *Assize* does commence: ~~and~~ *blod* ~~and~~ *will*
 He pleads his Eyes and Ears, and thence does urge:
 They from each Tittle strive themselves to purge.

In short, the thing was scan'd, and furnish'd sport.
 For the whole Kingdom, Country, Town and Court.
 Upon the Stage fitly these things appear;
Killing no Murder, is safe Doctrine there:
 Wou'd our *State-Poets* us'd but half the care.
 The *Monarch*, who but now for pity calls,
 Is Stabb'd or so; stay till the Curtain Falls,
 Behind the Scenes we strait reverse his doom;
 You'll see him fooling in the *Tyring-Room*.
 These are the harmless ways that *Poets* take,
 We but present those Tales that others make.
 Our Faith and Duty's pure without allay;
 As our *Apollo*, we our Kings obey;
 To both *Implicit* Homage always pay.
 When the God moves, we seldom reasoning stand,
 But fearless march where'er he does command.
 And thus we treat all Mortal Majesty,
 And never put the saucy Question, *Why?*
 The Muse to suffer with the Crown, content,
 We know, went into wilful Banishment.
 Cowley, that living and embodied Muse,
 Fore *prosperous* Vice, *unhappy* Vertue chose,
 In Foreign Air he sigh'd, and did complain,
 And follow'd still the *Royal* Exil'd Train,
 Where beauteous *Seine* divides its noble way;
 'Twas there the *Melancholy* Cowley lay:
 Upon those banks the inspired Mortal slept,
 And when he thought of *Sion's* woes, he wept.
 His Harp neglected on a Willow hung,
 And next, till **CHARLES** in Triumph came, was strung.
 Nay,

Nay, till blest Years brought *Cæsar* home again,
Dryden to purpose never drew his Pen :
 He, happy Favourite of the Tuneful Nine,
 Came with an early offering to your shrine,
 Embalm'd in deathless Verse the Monarch's Name ;
 Verse, which shall keep it fresh, in Youthful prime,
 When *Rustat*'s sacred gift must yield to time.
 Thus we, the humbler Fry, our mite, have brought,
 By him at once duty and numbers taught.
 Our Lives----- What's that ? and our Estates are less :
 When *Water-Men* and *Poets* e'er address,
 Not the least word of *Fortunes* they express.
 Thus much, dread Sir, accept.
 Poets are *Seers* ; in Fates Dark Journal skill'd,
 We find each Page with glorious Actions fill'd :
 Till unfledg'd Years bring on the happy Date,
 Our Pens on your Victorious Sword shall wait.

F I N I S.

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